

EAAC – Education & Outreach Subcommittee Meeting

May 19, 2022

Noon – 1:00 PM



Michigan Public Service Commission

Welcome & Meeting Focus

Meeting Focus:

Level Setting - Developing a mechanism for stakeholder input on MPSC communications and materials

Meeting Agenda

Time	Agenda Item	Facilitator
12:00 – 12:03	Welcome	Mary Wilkins
12:03 – 12:08	Group Agreements	Briana Parker
12:08 – 12:15	Review of Subcommittee Goals & Proposed 2022 Workplan	Briana DuBose
12:15 – 12:30	Presentation: An Overview of the MPSC's materials and materials development process	Reka Holley Voelker Christine Adams
12:30 – 12:50	Committee Discussion	Reka Holley Voelker Christine Adams
12:50 – 12:55	Announcements	Mary Wilkins
12:55 – 1:00	Next Steps & Conclusion	Mary Wilkins

Group Agreements

Briana Parker, Elevate

Co-Leader

EAAC Outreach & Education Subcommittee

Group Agreements

- Be accountable and actively listen to others.
- Use “I” statements when speaking.
- Remember that we are here for a bigger purpose.
- Celebrate each other’s sharing and ideas.
- Agree to disagree.
- Contribute to a space of care; keep each other safe.
- Practice making space for others when you have talked a lot and speak up when you can. Call in others.
- Lead with impact over intentions; ask for clarification from a place of curiosity when in doubt. Let us be mindful of our actions.
- Take the time to address issues in the moment, reflect on issues in real time, take responsibility to honor our commitments.
- Umoja Principle: If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.

2022 Goals and Workplan

Briana DuBose, EcoWorks

Co-Leader

EAAC Outreach & Education Subcommittee

2022 Committee Goals

Commission Charge

1. Establish regular mechanism for stakeholders to provide input on improving communications and materials
2. Broaden outreach groups traditionally not a part of utility communications
3. Improve the dissemination of energy assistance information to difficult to reach customers

2022 Goals

1. Establish a process for stakeholder and community-based input re: materials and communications channels
2. Review and provide input for improving the Commission's Energy Assistance Toolkit which will be updated and reissued Oct. 1, 2022, for the 2022/2023 heating season
3. Identify community-based groups, not already a part of the Commission's outreach, that will partner with the Commission to disseminate assistance information for the 2022/2023 heating season

2022 Committee Workplan

Month	Topic/Focus	Proposed Agenda Items
June	Establishing a regular mechanism for stakeholder and community input on Commission materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of materials feedback process straw proposal• Discussion re: included materials and strengths/weaknesses/concerns with the straw proposal
July	Broadening Outreach to non-traditional stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss revised straw proposal for materials review• Presentation: traditional stakeholders, Commission target groups• Discussion: who/what types of groups are missing
August	Working session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of final materials review process• Review MPSC's 2021/2022 Energy Assistance Toolkit
September	Broadening Outreach to non-traditional stakeholders	

2022 Committee Workplan

Month	Topic/Focus	Proposed Agenda Items
October	TBD or cancel to focus on outreach	
November	Review and Administrative Outlook	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recap Energy Policy Conference• Report outs re: Energy Assistance Toolkit Outreach• Discussion re: Year End Status Report
December	2023 Planning	

Level Setting & Discussion

Establishing a regular mechanism for stakeholders to provide input on improving MPSC communications and materials

Reka Holley Voelker, MPSC

Co-Leader

EAAC Outreach & Education Subcommittee

Christine Adams, MPSC

Communications Analyst

MPSC Materials Overview

Reka Holley Voelker
Manager, Communications Section



Michigan Public Service Commission

Commission Communications & Outreach Channels



Gretchen Whitmer, Governor
Dan Scripps, Chair
Tremaine Phillips, Commissioner
Katherine Peretick, Commissioner

www.michigan.gov/mpsc

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE May 12, 2022

Media contact: [Matt Helms](mailto:Matt.Helms@mpsc.michigan.gov) 517-284-8300

Customer Assistance: 800-292-9555

MPSC approves settlement agreement in Upper Peninsula utility's long-range energy plan

The Michigan Public Service Commission today approved a settlement agreement resolving Upper Michigan Energy Resources Corp.'s (UMERC) integrated resource plan (IRP), the utility's long-range projections for providing electricity to its customers in the Upper Peninsula ([Case No. U-21081](#)).

Approval of the settlement agreement authorizes UMERC to proceed with its preferred course of action, relying on the use and continued maintenance of its 10 reciprocating internal combustion engine units at the utility's two natural gas-fired power plants built in 2015 and 2019 to boost electric reliability and replace an aging of total capacity of 183 megawatts (MW).

UMERC's IRP also calls for the utility to say the new solar generation would red potentially more volatile and higher-cost

UMERC filed [its application](#) for approval long-range forecasts for ensuring reliable requirements for reporting 5-, 10- and 15 Michigan's 2016 energy laws and are res the MPSC.



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About the MPSC Commission Activities Consumer Information Regulatory Information

Michigan Public Service Commission

The mission of the Michigan Public Service Commission is to serve the public by ensuring safe, reliable, and accessible energy and telecommunications services at reasonable rates.

Latest News

[MPSC approves settlement agreement in Upper Peninsula utility's long-range energy plan](#)

[MPSC to hold energy assistance fair May 24 in Benton Harbor](#)

[Commission OKs deadline extension for Consumers Energy's integrated resource plan after settlement agreement announced](#)

[Governor Whitmer, MPSC urge Michiganders to call MISS DIG 811 before digging as state marks Safe Digging Month](#)

Other News & Updates

MPSC Response to COVID-19

Get the latest information and updates related to the MPSC's response to COVID-19

[Get Help](#)

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Lansing, MI michigan.gov/mpsc Born February 15, 1939

Joined October 2010

518 Following 2,543 Followers

MPSC SPOTLIGHT

April 2022



The April edition of the MPSC Spotlight includes information on a new EJ screening tool, a recap of the MPSC's public hearing on Indiana Michigan Power Co.'s integrated resource plan, a sweet field trip to the Michigan Sugar Co., and more.

State of Michigan unveils new environmental justice screening tool to help address disproportionate community impacts from environmental hazards



The State of Michigan recently released MiEJScreen, a new environmental justice mapping and screening tool created to better inform planning and policy decisions and address the disproportionate impact of pollution on low-income communities and communities of color.

The public is invited to explore MiEJScreen and provide comments on it through May 16, 2022. The map allows users to explore the environmental, health, and socioeconomic conditions within a specific community

MPSC Visits Michigan Sugar Co. in Bay City






Chair Dan Scripps, Commissioner Katherine Peretick and several MPSC Staff members were able to see how beet sugar is made during a visit to the Michigan Sugar Co. manufacturing facility in Bay City, which is also a major energy user in the Saginaw Bay area.

Michigan Sugar Co.'s 930 employees produce 1.3 billion pounds of sugar each year from sugar beets grown by 900 grower-owner farmers in Michigan and Ontario. The company says that any sugar on your local grocery store shelf not labeled as produced from sugar cane (grown in southern states) is probably beet sugar from one of the farms supplying Michigan Sugar Co.

MPSC holds virtual public forum on Indiana Michigan Power Co.'s

Commission Materials

 Avoided Cost Fact Sheet January 20, 2022						
The Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA) encourages competition, conservation, reliability, and efficiency in generating and delivering electricity. PURPA established a class of generating facilities known as qualifying facilities (QFs). Michigan utilities are required to buy power generated by a QF smaller than 20 MW (or 5 MW with FERC approval) and are bound to compensate QFs based on the host utility's avoided cost. An electric utility's avoided cost is the amount the utility would pay to a QF in the utility's service area that is equal to the amount the utility would have to pay to generate the power itself or purchase from another source. This gives the QF an opportunity to produce power and be compensated at the appropriate avoided cost rate.						
Questions about the information in this fact sheet can be sent to Merideth Hadala: HadalaM@michigan.gov						
Company	Case No.	Status	Avoided Energy (per kWh)	Avoided Capacity	Standard Offer Tariff	Max Capacity Standard Offer
Consumers Energy	U-18090	1/20/2022 order in Case No. U-20165	QFs at or below 150 kW		Standard Offer Rate Schedules	2 MW
			Annual schedule of prices 3.1¢-5.6¢	\$51,700/ZRC-year (\$4,308.33/ZRC-month)		
			QFs over 150 kW			
			With Capacity Need: annual schedule of prices 3.1¢-5.6¢	With Capacity Need: \$51,700/ZRC-year (\$4,308.33/ZRC-month)		
			Without Capacity Need: contract rates option of i) 15-year contract based on LMP, or ii) 10-year contract with years 1-5 based on scheduled energy rates 2.77¢-4.23¢ & years 6-10 equal to the year 5 forecast	Without Capacity Need: MISO PRA		
DTE	U-18091	9/26/2019 Order	With Capacity Need: Years 1-5 based on forecasted energy rates 2.52¢-3.41¢, then variable rate based on actual energy cost of Bluewater Energy Center	With Capacity Need: 1.4¢/kWh	Standard Offer Rate Schedules (D78-83)	550 kW
			Without Capacity Need: contract rates option of i) Years 1-5 based on forecasted LMP energy rates 2.39¢-3.56¢, then variable rate based on actual LMP ii) Actual LMP	Without Capacity Need: MISO PRA		
Alpena Power Company	U-18089	10/29/2020 Order	Historically 3.928¢-4.425¢ (rolling average based on contract with Consumers Energy)	1.74¢-1.87¢/kWh	Standard Offer Rate Schedules (D35-41)	550 kW
*Rates are available through 2024						
Indiana Michigan Power Company	U-18092	3/21/2019 Order	Years 1-5 based on forecasted LMP energy rates 3.11¢-4.53¢, then variable rate based on actual LMP	\$0	Standard Offer Rate Schedules (D68-74)	550 kW
Northern States Power Company	U-18093	12/20/2018 Order	Years 1-5 based on forecasted LMP energy rates 2.92¢-4.05¢, then variable rate based on actual LMP	\$0	Standard Offer Rate Schedules (D47-47.72)	550 kW
Upper Peninsula Power Company	U-18094	2/6/2020 Order in U-20350	Years 1-5 based on forecasted LMP energy rates 2.78¢-4.32¢, then variable rate based on actual LMP	MISO PRA	Standard Offer Rate Schedules (D72.70-72.73)	550 kW
Upper Michigan Energy Resources Corporation	U-18095	12/20/2018 Order	Years 1-5 based on forecasted LMP energy rates 2.78¢-3¢, then variable rate based on previous year LMP	0.045¢ WPSC 0.059¢ WEPCO	Standard Offer Rate Schedules (D58-60.08 & 143-150)	550 kW
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DISCLAIMER: This document was prepared to aid the public's understanding of certain matters before the Commission and is subject to change subsequent to Commission orders. This document is not intended to modify, supplement, or be a substitute for the Commission's orders. The Commission's orders are the official action of the Commission.						



Issue Brief

Shutoff of Utility Services

- What are the Consumer Standards and Billing Practices for Electric and Natural Gas Service?**

The Michigan Public Service Commission's (MPSC) Consumer Standards and Billing Practices for Electric and Natural Gas Service are frequently referred to as the "billing rules." They are authorized by state law and lay out the parameters and practices that regulated utilities must follow in billing residential customers and large and small nonresidential customers for gas and electric service. The rules cover applying for service, customer deposits, meter reading procedures, meter accuracy and errors, billing and payment standards, voluntary termination of service, complaint procedures, procedures for shutoff and restoration of service, energy assistance and shutoff protection programs, dispute resolution, and MPSC appeal procedures, and can be found in the Michigan Administrative Code at [R 460.101 et seq.](#)¹
- What can a customer do if they believe their utility is not following the billing rules?**

Customers who have questions about the billing rules or who want to file a complaint against a utility if they think their rights are being violated should call the MPSC's Customer Assistance line at 1-800-292-9555.
- What can a customer expect when they call the MPSC with a utility concern?**

The MPSC keeps a record of all calls that are made to the customer service department. Customers will be asked to provide their name, phone number, billing address, and e-mail address and to identify their utility company. While customers may refuse to provide any or all of this information, options for assistance may be limited where the requested information is not provided.

Customer concerns involving a potential violation of MPSC Rules are classified as a complaint, and these customers may utilize either the informal or formal complaint processes to seek resolution for their concern. MPSC Staff will explain these processes to customers whose concerns fall into this category. It is important to note that the customer does not need to know the specific rule they believe the utility is violating, as these can be identified by staff based upon the allegations of the customer.

A customer concern that does not allege a violation of the rules is categorized as a case comment which is forwarded to the appropriate utility. If the case comment involves a point of dispute between the customer and the utility, the utility is required to contact the customer within two business days and to report back to the commission within ten days regarding the plan for resolution. *Rule 50 (R 460.150)*
- When do MPSC rules allow a utility to disconnect service to a residential electric or natural gas customer?**

A utility can shut off or deny service to a customer under certain circumstances, including non-payment of bills, unauthorized use of service, misrepresentation of identity to obtain utility service, refusal to arrange service at reasonable times for the purpose of inspection, meter reading, maintenance or replacement of customer equipment at the premises, or for the removal of a meter. *Rule 37 (R 460.137)*

¹ The Billing Rules were updated in December 2017. All Rules references are to the new billing rules.

Consumer Tips



June 2018



Are you a critical care utility customer?

A “critical care customer” means any customer who requires, or has a household member who requires, home medical equipment or a life support system, and who, on an annual basis, provides a commission-approved medical certification form from a physician or medical facility to the utility identifying the medical equipment or life support system and certifying that an interruption of service would be **immediately life-threatening**.¹

If your medical condition meets this definition, talk to your doctor or public health official about filling out the Michigan Public Service Commission-approved Medical Certification Form. Once approved by the utility, the form will give you or your family member some protections from shutoff of utility service. The Medical Certification Form is available from your utility and on their website. It is also available at www.michigan.gov/mpsc.

Critical care customer shutoff protections:

- A utility shall restore or refrain from shutting off service due to an inability to pay a bill where an interruption of service would be immediately life threatening.
- Customers will be granted a three business day grace period from shutoff of utility services for time to complete the Medical Certification Form.
- A utility shall notify the customer when they have received the completed Medical Certification Form.
- A file of critical care customers will be kept by the utility so they can make sure service is provided as long as a critical care customer resides in the home and the customer's inability to pay continues.
- You will be contacted by the utility when any scheduled service interruptions occur. The utility will contact you before any remote shutoff of utility services occurs.
- Nothing in this rule relieves the customer of his or her obligation to pay for utility service. A utility may require that the customer enter into a reasonable payment plan.²

NOTE: If critical care status changes, you, or a person in your home, must let the utility know of the change in status. However, if a person's status does not change, on an annual basis, you must submit an updated Medical Certification Form to the utility.

¹Michigan Admin Code R 460.102(i)

²Michigan Admin Code R 460.130a

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April 2018

The Rate Case: How Utility Rates are Set

Michigan law requires some regulation of most utility companies doing business in the state. The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) regulates investor-owned natural gas and electric companies, services of rural electric cooperatives, and some telephone services.

Overview of Rate Case Process

Regulated natural gas or electric companies must first request and obtain approval from the Commission to increase customer rates. The company starts the rate case process by filing its request with the Executive Secretary Section of the MPSC.

A rate case is a legal process carried out much like a trial in a courtroom. An administrative law judge (ALJ) presides at the hearing and parties are represented by attorneys. Hearings are conducted similar to proceedings in civil court; however, a jury is not seated, and the ALJ does not render the final decision. Following testimony and briefs by the parties, the presiding ALJ issues his/her determination in a Proposal For Decision (PFD), after which parties respond to the decision by filing exceptions to the PFD. The case is then ready for a Commission decision. The Commission renders the final decision and order in all cases.

Basic issues of utility pricing usually include:

- How much, if at all, a company should be permitted to revise its rates.
- Which group of customers (residential, commercial, or industrial) will see rate changes.

Participants

Parties to the rate case most often include the following:

- Utility company,
- MPSC staff,
- Parties to the case, and
- Intervenor.



The Rate Case Step-by-Step

Utility Files for a Rate Change

The utility company files an application for a rate change.

Public Notice

Public hearings are scheduled and notices of hearings are published.

- Comments for Commission can also be filed by contacting the MPSC at 800-292-9555.
- MPSC auditors review the applicant's financial books and records.
- MPSC staff and parties study the rate request, ask and answer written questions, prepare evidence, and submit testimony.

Administrative Hearing

The parties present in a courtroom setting before the presiding ALJ.

- The utility company presents witnesses for the case.
- MPSC staff and parties present their evidence and witnesses.
- Parties may ask questions of any witness.
- Parties may present written arguments.
- Parties file briefs on issues.

Proposal for Decision

The ALJ issues a PFD.

- Parties may file exceptions to the PFD.

Commission Order

The Commission prepares and issues its opinion and order.

Order May Be Appealed

Parties may appeal the order:

- to the MPSC by requesting a rehearing or a reconsideration of the order; or
- to the court of appropriate jurisdiction.

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October 2019



Utility-related senior programs and protections

Are you age 65 or older? If so, inform your utility company. There are programs to protect and assist you if you are having difficulty paying your gas, electric, or telephone bill.

Winter protections from shutoff

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) and state law require all regulated gas and electric companies, and municipal electric utilities, to provide shutoff protection for seniors, age 65 and older, during the heating season (November 1 through March 31).¹

If your gas or electric service is shut off before November 1, MPSC rules or state law require the utility to restore your service during the heating season without paying the past due amount, a deposit, reconnect fee, or other charges. There are no requirements for specific payment amounts during this time. When the heating season is over, your account will be placed on a payment plan and payment must begin immediately.

Consumers Energy and DTE Energy have programs that help customers manage energy payments with extended time to pay.

Shutoffs outside of the heating season for all customers can occur only between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Prior to a shutoff, a 10-day disconnect notice will be sent and the utility will make at least two telephone attempts to contact you before utility service is shut off.

Third party notification

You can designate someone else, such as a family member or friend, to receive bills, shutoff notices, or other mailings from the utility on your behalf. This allows a third party to help you keep track of your utility bills.

Medical Emergency and Critical Care Customers

An energy bill that is subject to shutoff may qualify for shut off protections under a Medical Emergency or Critical Care shutoff protection program. To see if you may qualify for either of the programs contact your utility.

Partial payment option

Income-eligible customers of DTE Energy or Consumers Energy who receive a shutoff notice, and are unable to pay the full amount of a bill, may make partial payments. There is also the option to designate either gas or electric service for termination. Contact your utility for details.

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Energy Consumer Tips Inventory

Consumer Tip Title	Topic	Consumer Tip Title	Topic
Residential Energy Bill Charges	Bills & Charges	Electrical Safety While Working From Home	Safety
The Real Story about Estimated Bills	Bills & Charges	MISS Dig 811	Safety
Utility Deposits - What Business Owners Need to know	Commercial	Portable Generator - Carbon Monoxide Safety	Safety
How does a nonprofit designation affect utility bills?	Commercial	Supplemental Home Heating Sources - Life Saving Tips	Safety
Energy Waste Reduction for your Business	Commercial - EWR	Protect Your Privacy and Prevent Utility Service Fraud	Scams
Utility Provider Contracts - What business owners need to know	Commercial	Protect Yourself from Utility Scams	Scams
The Formal Utility Complaint	Commission Processes	Utility Scam Alert Detector	Scams
The Rate Case: How Utility Rates are Set	Commission Processes	Medical Emergency Shut Off Protections	Shutoff Protections & Assistance
Beat the Heat & Save	EWR	Energy Assistance & Shut Off Protections - Residential Customers	Shutoff Protections & Assistance
Energy Waste Reduction for your home	EWR	Programs and Protections for Seniors	Shutoff Protections & Assistance
Kids can save energy too!	EWR	Utility Help for Military Families	Shutoff Protections & Assistance
Tips on Saving Energy & Money at Home	EWR	Energy Assistance and How to Apply	Shutoff Protections & Assistance
Line Clearing	Infrastructure	The Home Heating Credit	Shutoff Protections & Assistance
Smart Grid and Advanced Energy Metering Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Critical Care Shut Off Protections	Shutoff Protections & Assistance
Appliance Service Plans	Non-regulated programs	Demand Response - Electric Time of Use Rates	Utility Rates & Programs
Electric Choice for Residential and Commercial Customers	Non-regulated programs	Distributed Energy Program	Utility Rates & Programs
Natural Gas Choice	Non-regulated programs	Report Telephone and Electric Cable Theft	
Electric Service Outage Credits	Outages	Tips for Terminating or Changing Service	
Surviving Power Outages	Outages	Utility Bills and your credit report	
		Utility Meter Accessibility	
		Utility Tips for Renters & Homeowners	

MPSC Materials Development Process

Christine Adams
Communications Section



Michigan Public Service Commission

Why do we want to create this?



Discuss with Subject Matter Experts

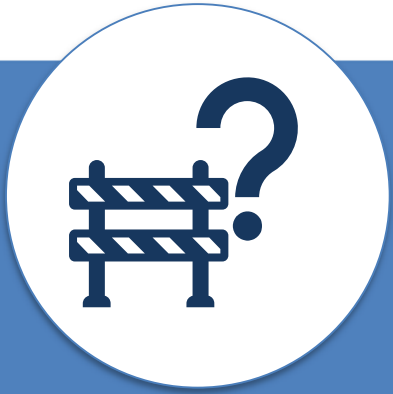
- Create awareness
- Inform of a process
- Change a behavior

What are the objectives?



- What we want the audience to know?
- What the audience wants to know?
- What needs to be emphasized so the audience gets it right?

Who are the audiences?



- How well do we know our audience's concerns, needs, and priorities?
- What barriers, biases or perceptions might they have that could make them receptive or resistant to receiving the message?

How will this be distributed?



Communication Tools:

- Social media
- Press release
- Mailings
- Email
- Stakeholders
- Website

How will this be designed?



Design development:

- Determine layout
- Tone and approach
- Use of plain language
- Accessibility

How will this be tested?



The document is sent out to a diverse group of people to receive feedback.

Example: Before



June 2018

Natural gas choice is here

Michigan residential natural gas customers may have the option to purchase their natural gas from an Alternative Gas Supplier (AGS) or remain a full-service customer with their current gas utility.

Things you should know about Michigan's gas customer choice program

- You do not have to switch to an AGS.
- If you stay as a full-service customer of your current utility, your natural gas rates will continue to be regulated by the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC).
- If you choose to purchase your natural gas from an AGS, the gas rate you are charged for natural gas will **NOT** be regulated by the MPSC. You will be responsible for choosing the AGS and committing to a contract made between you and the AGS.
- Whether you stay with your utility as a full-service natural gas customer or contract with an AGS for your natural gas supply, your current natural gas utility will continue to deliver the natural gas, read your meter, bill your account, and handle emergencies as it does now. Your natural gas utility will also continue to charge you for delivery and customer charges as it does now at rates regulated by the MPSC. When you receive your bill, you will pay your current natural gas utility and it, in turn, will pay your AGS.

Become an informed shopper: questions to ask

- What rate will be charged? Will the rate remain constant for the term of the contract (a "fixed rate") or can the rate change from month to month (a "variable rate")?
- Is there a penalty after the 30-day unconditional cancellation period? If so, how much? (The cancellation penalty could be a set amount)
- What happens when the contract ends? Does it continue unless steps are taken to cancel it? If it does continue, will I be contacted about price changes? If so, how?
- All residential customers must be mailed a confirmation letter from the AGS within seven days of signing the contract.^{A,B,C,D}
- All residential and small commercial customers are entitled to a 30-day unconditional cancellation period, starting from the day after they initially sign.^{A,B,C,D}
- If you decide to cancel your AGS contract and return to full-service from your natural gas utility, contact your AGS. Cancellations can be done through verbal or written communication.

QUICK CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Compare rates at www.michigan.gov/CompareMIGas
- ☐ AGS rates are **NOT** regulated by the MPSC.
- ☐ Is the term of the contract a fixed or variable rate?
- ☐ What is the length of the contract?
- ☐ Is there a cancellation fee?

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with the AGS. It may take two to six weeks for the change to appear on your bill.^{A,B,C,D}

- You may change AGSs one time in any 12-month period at no cost to you. A \$10 fee will be charged by your utility for each additional change of AGS within the same 12-month period. The change will occur at the beginning of the utility's next billing cycle.^{A,B,C,D}

Further assistance

If a problem cannot be resolved by speaking with your AGS or utility company, contact the MPSC at **800-292-9555** or online at www.michigan.gov/mpsc

For more information about the Gas Customer Choice Program, go to the MPSC's website: www.michigan.gov/CompareMIGas

^ADTE Gas Co. Rate Book, Section F
^BConsumers Energy Co. Rate Book, Section F
^CMichigan Gas Co. Rate Book, Section F
^DSemco Energy Co. Rate Book, Section F

Sample bills of a full service utility customer and an AGS gas choice customer are compared below.

Example Full-Service Customer Utility Bill

Current Charges	
Customer Charge ¹	\$11.50
Supplemental Charges ¹	
Gas Cost Recovery or Cost of Gas Charge ^{2,3}	
Distribution Charge ¹	100 Ccf @ 0.163440 = \$16.34

Example AGS Customer Utility Bill

Current Charges	
Customer Charge ¹	\$11.50
Supplemental Charges ¹	
Alternative Natural Gas Suppliers Charge or AGS Cost of Gas Charge ^{2,3}	
Distribution Charge ¹	100 Ccf @ 0.163440 = \$16.34

¹Charges assessed by your utility for meter reading, billing, and delivering (distributing) the gas to your home. Supplemental charges may include reservation, balance and demand, and energy optimization utility charges. These charges are regulated by the MPSC and are mostly the same whether you are a full-service or choice customer.

²Gas Cost Recovery (GCR) or Cost of Gas Charge is the price per Ccf (hundred cubic feet) for gas used during the billing period. The annual GCR price may fluctuate within a range set by the MPSC for full-service customers.

³AGS Cost of Gas Charge is the price paid if you are a choice customer. This price is **not regulated by the MPSC. It is this price that you compare with the GCR price for full-service customers.** Depending on your contract, this price may be fixed for the term of your contract or may vary during the contract term.

The contents of this document are valid at the time of publication and may be subject to change.

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Example: After

YOU HAVE A CHOICE

DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN CHOOSE WHO YOU BUY YOUR NATURAL GAS FROM?

Michigan's Gas Customer Choice Program (GCC) allows natural gas customers of Consumers Energy, DTE Gas, Michigan Gas Utilities, and SEMCO to shop around for gas from Alternative Gas Suppliers.

You may choose an Alternative Gas Supplier (AGS) or do nothing and continue to get your natural gas from your local gas utility under existing regulated rates.



WHAT IS AN ALTERNATIVE GAS SUPPLIER (AGS)?

An AGS or Supplier is a separate entity from your local gas utility company.

They are required to be licensed by the Michigan Public Service Commission.

They sell natural gas at unregulated rates to customers. The gas is delivered by the local natural gas utility.





DO I HAVE TO SWITCH?

No.

- You can select an AGS or
- Do nothing and services from your local gas utility will continue.

Your local gas utility delivers natural gas regardless of the supplier.

The MPSC DOES NOT regulate the rates of AGS's.



CAN I SWITCH AT ANY TIME?

No.

In order to switch you must:

- Be up to date on current utility bill.

If you have switched suppliers within the last 12 months:

- \$10.00 will be charged for each change within the same 12-month period.

If you return to the utility you may not switch to an AGS for 12 months.

WHAT IS A FIXED VS VARIABLE PRICE PLAN?

When natural gas is purchased from a local gas utility, the rate charged changes periodically and is regulated and approved by the MPSC.

AGSs may offer a fixed and/or a variable price. Some offers may include a lower introductory price or other incentives that may appeal to customers.



PRICE PLAN

FIXED

Charges the same amount per each unit consumed for the length of the contract, regardless of any changes in the natural gas market.

VARIABLE

Charges a monthly rate per each unit consumed (as defined in the sales contract) which typically changes each calendar month.

BEFORE SIGNING

Understand your Contract:

1. Length of contract.
2. Your right to cancel.
3. Fee for early termination.
4. Fixed or Variable price plan.

For more information visit our [Natural Gas Customer Choice website](#).



CONTRACT

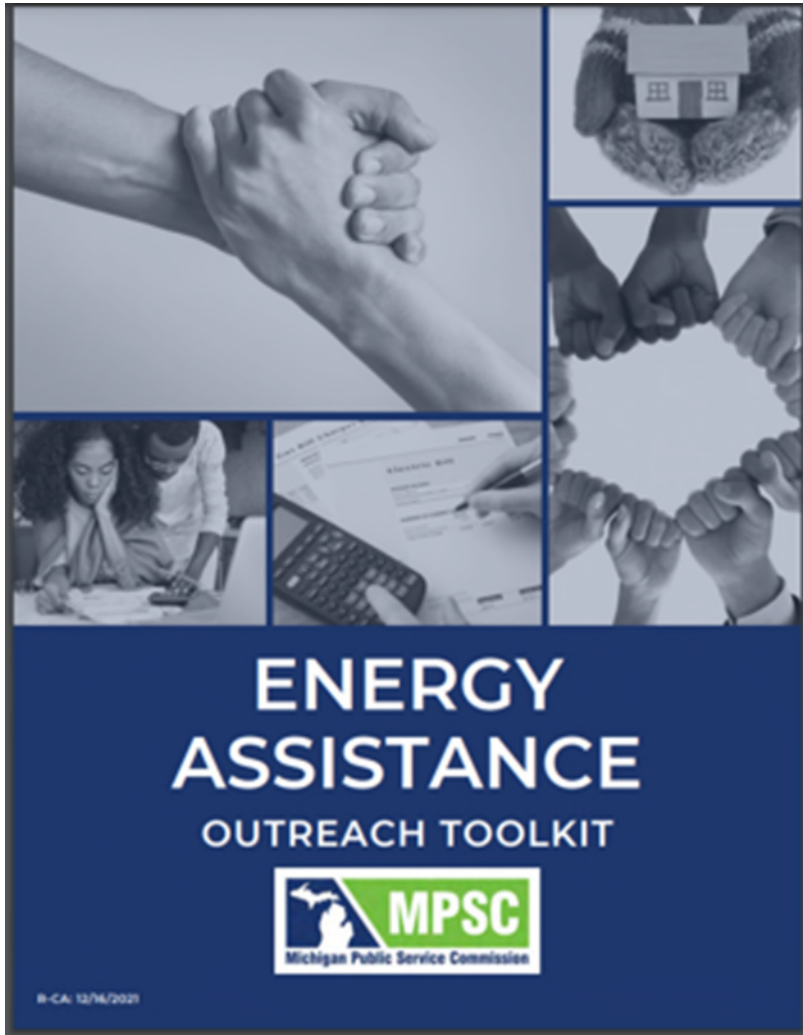


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The MPSC's 2021 Energy Assistance Toolkit



- Designed to help organizations with their own outreach
- Shared with more than 120 contacts of advocacy organizations, government agencies, and community-based organizations
- The toolkit includes
 - An introductory letter explaining purpose
 - An “Energy Assistance 101” refresher
 - Outreach Tips & Best Practices
 - Collection of MPSC design resources

Energy Assistance Toolkit – Sample Materials

- Sample materials included social media infographics, video PSAs, and 11 consumer tips with some including non-English language options including Spanish, Arabic, Simple Chinese, and Bengali. Some sample materials included:
 - Consumer Tips
 - *Energy Assistance & Shut-Off Protections – Residential Customers (S,A,C,B)*
 - *Critical Case Customer Shut-off protections*
 - *Medical Emergency Shut-off Protection*
 - *Utility Help for Military Customers*
 - *Utility Related Senior Programs and Protections*
 - *How to apply for energy assistance post card*
 - *Utility Scam Alert Detector (S,A,C)*
 - *Protect yourself against utility scams*
 - *Home Heating Credit – Residential Customers 2021*
 - *Electrical Safety while working from home*
 - *6 safety tips for portable generators*
 - Social Media
 - *Worried about your energy bills infographic (S,A,C,B)*

Discussion

- What materials does the Commission Charge apply to?
Or, alternatively, what materials should be the focus of our efforts?
- Thinking specifically about vulnerable customers, are other materials needed?
- What should the role of stakeholders be?

Announcements

Announcements

- **Benton Harbor Resource Fair & Listening Session**

May 24, 2022, 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Michigan Works! Service Center

499 W. Main Street

Benton Harbor, MI

Next Steps

Mary Wilkins, MPSC

Co-Leader

EAAC Outreach & Education Subcommittee

Next Steps

- Send any feedback on the proposed work plan and timeline to Reka (HolleyR@Michigan.gov) by May 27
- Send any feedback regarding additional materials for vulnerable customers to Reka (HolleyR@Michigan.gov) by May 27

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 9 @ Noon